We have been all in the Wrong;

O R,

T H O U G H T S

UPON THE

D I S S O L U T I O N

OF THE

LATE, AND CONDUCT OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT,

AND UPON

MR. FOX's EAST-INDIA BILLS.

L O N D O N:

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INTRODUCTION.

A FEW copies of the following pamphlet were printed at a private preſs, in a diſtant part of the kingdom, and handed about among the friends of the diſtinguiſhed Author. It has been ſo much in requeſt in our political circles, that the Editor hopes he ſhall be forgiven by the Author, for preſuming to lay it before the public without his authority.

The eminent Writer has placed the important ſubjects which have lately agitated the community, and particularly MR. FOX's EAST INDIA BILL, in a point of view ſo original and ſtriking, that the Editor thinks ſo valuable an Eſſay ſhould not be kept from the eye of the People, eſpecially now, that they are recovering from phrenzy, and are diſpoſed to examine with coolneſs the queſtions which have lately excited ſuch violent contention.

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We have been all in the Wrong;

OR,

THOUGHTS

UPON THE

DISSOLUTION

OF THE

LATE, AND CONDUCT OF THE PRESENT, PARLIAMENT, &c. &c.

IT is the obſervation of an hiſtorian, who publiſhed in the year 1773, that, in the courſe of the two preceding years, the conſtitutions of Sweden, Poland, and France, having been overturned and reduced to military governments, human nature had received the three ſevereſt ſtrokes that had ever been inflicted upon her in ſo ſhort a ſpace of time.

 At

At that time, it was little foreſeen, that, in ten years more, Britain would receive three ſtrokes equally ſevere to her; and that, in the year 1783, America would be loſt, Ireland hanging upon England only by a thread, and the Engliſh Empire in the Eaſt tottering to its fall.

When events ſo unforeſeen have happened in other parts, it is full time for Engliſhmen to look forward to what they may, and without much foreſight, expect at home. New circumſtances and ſituations always produce new conſequences; and, I am a bad judge of the chain of connection between political cauſes and effects, if ſome late innovations in Britain do not portend changes, and very important ones too, in her freedom, wealth, and power, in much leſs time than the above great revolutions have happened elſewhere; but which people ſeem as little aware of, as they were twelve years ago, that thoſe revolutions would happen at all.

Within

Within theſe few months the following ſix circumſtances have become manifeſt at home, either new, or almoſt new to the eye, or rendered leſs doubtful in their appearance than they formerly were.

The firſt is, That the command of the purſe in the hands of the Houſe of Commons, which has ſubſiſted as a continual controul upon the power of the Crown, ſince the Conqueſt, down to the year 1784, can no longer be of uſe; becauſe it can no longer be exerted. In the differences between the preſent Miniſters and the late Houſe of Commons, there were not wanting heads of party bold enough, and a Houſe of Commons ſpirited enough, to uſe the conſtitutional weapon of their anceſtors, in what they thought their own and their country's cauſe. But they durſt not ſtrike the ſtroke; becauſe they ſaw it would fall upon the public creditors, and the public officers of Government, but not on the Miniſters of the Crown. The ſeparation of the accompts of the King, and of the accompts of the nation, ſince the Revolu-

tion, has brought the innovation imperceptibly on: But it is a melancholy profpect, that, in future times, this check upon the power of the Crown will only be remembered as one of thofe fine colours in the rainbow of the Britifh Conftitution, which, like many others, time has caufed to melt and vanifh into air.

2dly, It had been faid for ages paft, that the Houfe of Lords was, in all things, devoted to the will of the Crown. The affertion was probably unjuft. But, laft Spring, wife men, with pain, heard it averred by the one fide, and never fufficiently contradicted by the other, that the mere whifper of the Sovereign's wifhes, and by a perfon not even in office, did more in that Houfe in a minute, than all the haughtinefs of Henry VIII. and all the artifices of Wolfey, could do in a long reign.

3dly, It was fhewn laft Spring, that even the fpirit of a very fpirited Houfe of Commons, was not able to fecure its independence. The laft Houfe of Commons did what

what none ſince the Conqueſt have done: They pulled down two adminiſtrations in the plenitude of their power, and generouſly ſubmitted to loſe their own importance, by a diſſolution of Parliament, rather than to obey the beheſts of a third. But the numbers of the Houſe, which, in paſt times, had been accounted its ſtrength, were then diſcovered to be the ſource of its weakneſs. In a body of above 500 men, it was found almoſt impoſſible to prevent the ſeduction and deſertion of ſeveral from their own principles and party, and the firm phalanx was undone by the meaneſt of its own members.

4thly, The late movements of the people have made it plain that they cannot be truſted with their own ſafety. They naturally are, and ſhould be jealous of the influence of the Crown, and of the influence of Miniſters. A bill was brought into Parliament, which they were told tended to leſſen the influence of both. Yet, contrary to their own paſſions, habits, and intereſts, they turned againſt that hand

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which preſented it, and took ſide with that Royal and Miniſterial power which had cruſhed their anceſtors, and will ſooner or later cruſh their poſterity.

5thly, The Crown received a ſtroke in the general wreck of laſt winter, of which at preſent it little ſees the conſequences, when it was adviſed to make an appeal to the people, againſt the Houſe of Commons; or, in other words, to diſſolve haſtily and peremptorily a Houſe of Commons which a Miniſter did not like, and which did not like him, in hopes of getting another more to his liking; a practice long fatal to the Crown; and which, therefore, none of its Miniſters had, for near fourſcore years, adviſed it to adopt. Such an appeal may ſerve the turn of the day to a Miniſter; but, under pretence of ſerving the King, it brings ruin on the Throne. It has been well ſaid, that hiſtory is the ſcience of Kings. The following account of ſuch appeals may ſhow to Kings, if not to their ſubjects, the effects of them upon both. I ſay the effects of them; for it is theſe, theſe which are to

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be dreaded, more than the immediate operation of the meaſure itſelf.

The worſt of all the Engliſh Sovereigns, Queen Mary, was the firſt who dealt in appeals to the people againſt her Parliaments. When the Houſe of Commons remonſtrated againſt her marriage with Philip II. a meaſure in which her ambition and vanity had engaged her, ſhe inſtantly diſſolved it, and called another. That other ſhe diſmiſſed in thirty days after it met. A third and a fourth had ſimilar fates; becauſe every new Parliament that ſhe called was more refractory to her will than the former. What was the conſequence? Her reign was inglorious, ſhe died of chagrin, and her memory is deteſted.

Her ſucceſſor, Elizabeth, talked, indeed, high to her Parliaments; but ſhe won them by her compliance with their requeſts. Inſtead of tilting the Houſe of Peers againſt the Houſe of Commons, the people againſt their repreſentatives, and one half of the nation againſt the other, ſhe made it the rule

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of her government to bind every citizen to another, and the whole to the Throne. Her reign was glorious, ſhe died full of years and of honour, and her memory is adored.

After King James had reigned near 20 years, without almoſt any pain but what he created to himſelf, he was involved in troubles, for the reſt of his reign, by a ſudden and violent diſſolution of a Houſe of Commons, which, in the year 1621, had preſented a remonſtrance that they were entitled to give him their counſel in matters of government, and which he called, forſooth, an invaſion of his prerogative. He was the firſt Prince who publiſhed his reaſons of appeal; not, indeed, to the ſucceeding Parliament, who he could hardly expect would reliſh a compliment to themſelves, at the expence of their predeceſſors; but to the people. What was the conſequence? That ſucceeding Parliament thwarted all his meaſures, and called in queſtion one half of the prerogatives which his anceſtors had enjoyed ſince the Conqueſt.

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The whole reign of Charles I. was a train of appeals by the Sovereign to the people, againſt their repreſentatives. The conſequence was, that he gave occaſion for bringing the reſt of thoſe prerogatives into queſtion, and loſt the whole.

Charles II. appealed thrice in two years. In the mean time, he was obliged to become a penſioner to the enemy of his kingdom to get protection to himſelf. * He died unfortunately before he was old. Had he lived a little longer, his brother's fate would probably have been his; for the ſtorm that burſt on the one brother, was gathering in the laſt five years of the reign of the other.

King James ſuddenly diſſolved a Parliament that diſpleaſed him, but he never ſaw another.

King William, before he was a year on the Throne, diſſolved, on a ſudden, that Parliament which had placed him upon it. It was the only falſe ſtep that he ever made; becauſe it forced him afterwards into other differences with other Parliaments, and into

other diſſolutions. There are letters exiſting, in private hands, between him and Lord Sunderland, a ſhort time before he died, which ſhow, that he was conſcious of the fundamental error of this breach with his firſt and his Whig Parliament. Theſe circumſtances forced him to engage his mind, which was magnanimous and open, in the meaneſt of all employments for a Sovereign, the detail of intrigue, and of intrigue with his own ſubjects and ſervants, made him more than once think of throwing up a Crown which ſat ſo uneaſy on his head, and ſhortened his days.

Warned by an example which coſt even ſo great a Prince ſo dear, Queen Anne, in the firſt years of her reign, inſtead of differing with her Houſe of Commons, directed *them*, by allowing herſelf to be directed by them; and theſe years were marked with glory to the nation and to herſelf. In the end of her reign ſhe reverſed her conduct: She took advantage of the ſpectres and chimeras, artfully raiſed, of danger to the church, of the popularity of Doctor Sacheverel, and

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of the phrenzy of the times; and appealed to the temporary misapprehension of the People, against her Parliament and her Ministers. The consequence was, that, from that moment, her own, and the nation's glories, sunk, and she died of a timorous, a hesitating, and a broken heart.

I do not remember any instance in English history, in which the Crown has not suffered sooner or later, and indeed generally very soon, by a premature dissolution of Parliament, except in that dissolution which was necessarily occasioned by the quarrel between the two Houses concerning Ashby and White in the year 1704. But, in that instance, the Crown had not fomented the quarrel; it took no side with either House; none of its Ministers threw fuel into the fire in every county, and borough, and family, in the kingdom; none of its confidents, or pretended confidents, out of office, whispered its wishes to the Peers.

In many of the instances which I have given, the Prince had reason to hope that,

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by diſſolving one Parliament which he did not like, he could get another more to his liking. Queen Mary, who was the firſt Engliſh Sovereign that bribed her own ſubjects, diſtributed four hundred thouſand pounds of Spaniſh money to gain compliance with her will from her ſecond Parliament; but in vain. Her courtiers, indeed, did not whiſper her wiſhes, but ſhe wrote circular letters, with her own hand, to the electors and the elected of her third Parliament, at a time when letters from Princes had full as much weight as the whiſpers of their courtiers have now, to gain compliance with her will; but in vain. James the Firſt thought he had ſecured the attachment of Parliament for ever to his favourite Buckingham, by calling a Parliament at a time when his favourite was the moſt popular man in the nation for breaking off the Spaniſh match, and animating his maſter and the nation againſt Spain; yet, in a very ſhort time, that favourite and that maſter, loſt all their accidental and momentary popularity for ever. After Charles I. had quarrelled with his

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two firſt Parliaments on points of prerogative, and had delayed for two years to call a third, he hoped to recover popularity to Buckingham, by making Buckingham the perſon who, at the Council-board, publicly preſſed him to be reconciled to his people, and to call a new Parliament; yet that new Parliament framed the famous petition of right, which was the firſt move that took the crown from his head. When Charles II. diſſolved his laſt Parliament, all England reſounded with huzzas, and with prayers for the prerogatives of monarchy; yet, in five years after, all England drove their Monarch into exile. When King William diſſolved his Whig Parliament, he was flattered with the ſupport of the whole Tory party, the long victorious Tory party, to take their uſual ſtation behind the throne; yet that Tory party, by offering him the triennial and the place-bills, put him under the neceſſity of refuſing both, and the mortification in the end of conſenting to the firſt of them. His Parliaments, in general, began with addreſſes, but ended with remonſtrances. In his laſt Parliament, Mr. Harley,

ley, omnipotent with a great party in the Houſe, anſwered for the Houſe; yet he and that party forced their Prince to diſmiſs his Dutch guards, the companions of all his glories and dangers, threw diſgrace on treaties which he had perſonally conducted, and impeached his favourites, and, among others, the virtuous Lord Sommers, becauſe he happened unluckily to be in their company.

The reaſons of theſe things are obvious: A Prince who diſſolves a Parliament, becauſe it is not compliant with the will of his Miniſters, puts himſelf at the head of one part of his ſubjects againſt the other, becomes the head of a party inſtead of the King of England, and thereby expoſes himſelf to all the hazards of party. His Miniſters, conſcious of his and their critical ſituations, become either timid or deſperate, that is, either uſeleſs to him, or hurtful to him: Moſt of the Miniſters of Charles I. were in the firſt predicament, the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Stafford in the laſt. Or, to ſecure their popularity, if they chance

to have it, or to recover it, if they have it not, they court the people at the expence of their maſter: This was the conduct of moſt of the Miniſters of Charles II. and King William. Or, laſtly, fearing that he may change his Miniſters with the ſame indifference with which he changes his Parliaments, they combine with all who will combine with them, againſt him, to make him dependent on themſelves; and thus, in eſcaping from an imaginary dependence upon one ſet of men, he may fall into a real dependence upon another. This happened, in ſome degree, when all the Miniſters of George II. in one body, threw all the adminiſtration of the State looſe in one moment, to force Lord Carteret, whoſe counſels and counſellors were incompatible with theirs, from the Cabinet.—God grant that none of the deſcendents of that Monarch may ever expoſe themſelves to meet with the ſame fate.

But a King of England, who, like Queen Elizabeth, gives a generous credit to his Parliaments and his Miniſters, and ſtability

to both; and who, like her, does not force diſcordant councils and counſellors upon his adminiſtrations, will not be expoſed to ſuch diſgraces, or they will paſs only like a cloud acroſs a fine ſky. What can ſuch a Prince have to fear either from his Miniſters or from his Parliaments?—*From his Miniſters!* if their loyalty does not lead them to comply with every thing that he can reaſonably deſire, or even wiſh, their gratitude will. If their gratitude does not, common decency will. If decency does not, common prudence, and the ſenſe of their own intereſt, will.—*From his Parliaments!* paſt experience, preſent ſituation, ſhow that he has ſtill leſs to fear from them. Is it wealth that he expects from them? He has enough for common exigencies. If unforſeen exigencies have brought him into debt, they pay it. Is it power that he wants? To give him more would only endanger what he has. Does a Pretender to his throne aſſault it? All Britain and Ireland ſtart up in arms in his defence. Are his own private dominions in danger? England pours out her blood, and thirty millions of her

treaſures

treasures, in quarrels that are not her own. Are the distant dominions of his Crown attempted to be severed from it? An hundred millions are expended to hold them together. Does he desire the laws of Nature to be suspended, from considerations (and I own it wise ones too) of family pride? Parliament, by a Royal Marriage Act, suspends them. Are personal insults against him to be revenged? The House of Commons expel Mr. Wilkes. Does good sense bring his Prince to reflect that that measure was too strong? Mr. Wilkes is again admitted by the House. Is the Sovereign (like his present Majesty) a friend to liberty; a lover of science; firm, yet yielding; modest, yet collected; tender, yet just of popular, yet dignified manners? A whole nation adores him. What, then, has he to fear? The demons, the only spectres he has to dread, are those counsellors who advise him to irritate one House of Parliament against the other, the represented against their representatives, and one half of the nation against the other; those coun-

ſellers who perſuade him to diſmiſs Miniſters in full poſſeſſion of the confidence of the Houſe of Commons, and admit Miniſters who have to buy it, or to gain it by deception, violence, and treachery, and who may loſe it by accident, as they got it by accident; thoſe counſellors who, reverſing the common maxim of politics, that Princes ought to unite their ſubjects, and diſunite their enemies, would engage him in meaſures to diſunite his ſubjects, and unite his enemies, by tempting them to take advantage of that diſunion, which the fatal councils and ambition of thoſe counſellors had created.

Conſcious of theſe things, George I. and George II. avoided all conteſts with their Parliaments, and with thoſe Miniſters who had the confidence of Parliament, or they yielded to them when it was right to do ſo. In a nation free, and therefore turbulent, great, and therefore envied, they knew that neither quiet could be preſerved at home, nor reſpect commanded at abroad, except by

by the ſupport of the Houſe of Commons; and that the ſupport of that Houſe could not be obtained but by an adminiſtration that had its confidence. George I. in the choice of his Miniſters, had no other rule but to take thoſe who could, with the moſt eaſe, carry his and the nation's buſineſs through that Houſe. He uſed to ſay to his Miniſters, that the counſels which they gave him were their own affair, and that they muſt anſwer for them to Parliament at the expence of their heads, if they gave him wrong ones. His ſon remembered the conduct of King William, whoſe mind was expanded like that of a God, who forgot the paſſions of the man in the duties of the King, and who employed in his ſervice not only thoſe who oppoſed him, but thoſe whom he knew had betrayed him, when he ſaw that their talents or influence could be uſeful to the public. George II. yielded to the truth of the obſervation, that oppoſition in Parliament, in a man of parts, in a free country, in which every man has a right to have his talents rated as they ought

to be, is only a mode of forcing thoſe talents to be made uſe of in the cauſe of his Sovereign and his country; talents which, in a country not free, can be brought out only by intrigue, and may be ſmothered by the ſame intrigue. Upon theſe principles, the firſt ſtep that he took was to appoint Sir Robert Walpole his Miniſter, who, in his oppoſition to the Court, had ſhown his capacity to ſerve it. He gave the conduct of parties to the Duke of Newcaſtle, who had been the cauſe of his being put under confinement by his father; becauſe he knew the Duke could conduct them. He entruſted the care of the war to Mr. Pit, who had treated his perſon and his country with irreverence; becauſe he knew that Mr. Pit alone, in the nation, could give ſucceſs to the war. And he forgave that cabal which had taken the Cabinet by ſtorm, when they drove Lord Carteret from it; becauſe the ſtate of public affairs required that weight ſhould be given to Adminiſtration, not taken from it. What were the conſequences of ſuch conduct to thoſe Princes and their

deſcendants?

descendants ? Their alliances were solicited; their arms dreaded; their persons respected by all nations; their families were aggrandised; their daughters courted to heir the great Protestant dominions in Europe; they acquired Empires more extensive than that of Rome, and lost part of one of them without almost feeling the blow.

It would be unfortunate for the descendants of those Princes, if, from the apparent, accidental, and perhaps only momentary success of one appeal to the people against their representatives, they should make such appeals one of the engines of their government. The very circumstances that may be used as arguments to encourage them, are those which should discourage them the most. Have the people called for a new Parliament ? They always have done so whenever they could; they always will do so whenever they can, partly from the love of change, but more from the meanest of all motives, love of money, and of importance to individuals. They know very well

that every new election takes two millions from the pockets of the elected, and puts them into the pockets of those who call for that Parliament. Have the new Ministers brought new friends into Parliament on the tide of their accidental popularity? These new friends, after taking advantage of the accident, may make advantage of it. They know their importance, and may set their own value upon it. It is not unknown to some who may read these sheets, that, towards the end of the struggle about the Cyder Bill, Lord Bute received above forty letters, from those who called themselves his friends, asking favours in terms which sufficiently indicated that those who wrote them, were resolved they would not be refused, and knew that they could not. All these letters were received in the course of a few days. He exclaimed, "I find these "people are not guided by principle as I "am. I have been too long among them;" and, with an honest indignation, threw up a power which he thought not worth retaining. Has the Crown been covered all over with

with addresses in compliment to the present Ministers, and in dislike of the late Ministers? Let it be remembered, that young Cromwell, when reduced to a private station, and drinking with his friends, used to sit upon a chest full of addresses, signed by near two millions of the good people of England and Scotland, which petitioned him to continue his power; Was this their attachment to Monarchy? That much more than one half of England, and all Scotland, in the year 1683, in addresses, congratulated Charles II. for governing no longer by Parliaments; Was this reverence for Parliament? That, in the reign of James II. the British nations thanked him, in addresses, for making the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance the rule of his government; Was this love of liberty? That a few years ago, near one half of England addressed his present Majesty to dissolve Parliament, in order to bring the late Ministers into power; and that the same persons lately called for a dissolution of it, in order to take it from them; Is this a consistence

ſiſtence of conduct and opinion, in men appealed to on nice queſtions of politics and the Conſtitution, on which a King of England can reſt his own or his family's ſafety? Thoſe who give counſel to their Sovereign, to put what they call his cauſe into the hands of the people, inſtead of his Parliament, adviſe him to take his Crown from a rock on which it reſts, and plant it on a bladder in the middle of the ocean.

The ſixth and laſt circumſtance of which I have to take notice, and, perhaps, not the leaſt unlucky, attending the events of laſt Spring, has been the fate of Mr. Fox. In a country like England, where every man can think, and ſpeak, and act as he pleaſes, every Miniſter, who brings a great inſtrument of Government into Parliament, muſt expect to create to himſelf many enemies, whoſe paſſions or intereſts may be affected by it; and for this reaſon, moſt Miniſters are glad to get through their adminiſtrations with as few attempts to national improvements as they can. But in the

the great inſtrument of government which Mr. Fox was to bring into Parliament for India, he had, beſides the common dangers of oppoſition, many uncommon ones to encounter, if he framed it ſo as effectually to ſave India; The hazard that the jealouſy of the Crown might be impoſed upon for the intereſts of prerogative; the animoſities of all that part of the India-Houſe which wiſhed to confine the whole plunder of India to themſelves and their friends, inſtead of beſtowing the ſuperfluity of its riches on their country; and the certainty that the ignorance and paſſions of the people would be played upon by ſpectres and chimeras about invaded charters. Of all theſe dangers Mr. Fox was warned; he knew them; he foretold them; but he deſpiſed them.—On the other hand, the allurements to him were tempting, to frame the bill, ſo as to anſwer only his own intereſts. If he gave the patronage of India to the Crown, he kept it for himſelf and his friends; becauſe, by the routine of buſineſs and office in England, and, indeed, all over Europe, ex-

cept, perhaps, at Berlin and Conſtantinople, the Sovereign, in the diſtribution of offices, acts by his Miniſters, and not in his own perſon. Mr. Pitt's bill, when *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, guarded anxiouſly for this pretended patronage to the Crown, but real patronage to the Miniſter, when it directed that a number of Privy Counſellors, named by the Crown, with the *Chancellor of the Exchequer* for their Preſident, ſhould be 'Commiſſioners for Indian 'affairs, with power to check, controul, 'and ſuperintend all its operations and 'concerns, which in any wiſe relate to the 'civil or military government or revenues 'of the territories and poſſeſſions of the 'United Company in the Eaſt-Indies.' Mr. Fox had, therefore, only to tread in the ſteps equally of his predeceſſors in power, and of his opponents in power, and to take to himſelf and his friends what they had taken, or intended to take to themſelves and their friends. But, inſtead of doing ſo, he ſuſpended the patronage of the Crown for four years; that is, till a period

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when it was a very great chance if he was a Minifter at all; and, in the mean time, he put it into the hands of Commiffioners appointed by the wifdom of the nation, the King, Lords, and Commons; becaufe, without a great power in the hands of thefe Commiffioners, for a few years, it was abfolutely impoffible for them to apply remedies to the diforders in India, which needed an immediate and a powerful exertion. That commiffion had fo little of a junto in it, that few of its members had ever dined together, except in public; and not one of them was under the leaft influence of Mr. Fox, except that influence which one man of public virtue has a right to over another. When I fay fo, I wifh to know if there be a perfon in the nation, who believes in his heart, that Lord Fitzwilliam would have done a wrong thing to pleafe Mr. Fox or any Minifter upon earth. The other Commiffioners were men of the faireft characters that could be found; the fureft proof of which is, that, even in this age of party rage, in which no fex, or age, or rank, or

 profeffion,

profeſſion, or virtue, is ſpared, not one vote was given againſt any one of them in the Houſe of Commons. If they have that family pride which ſuch an honour ſhould inſpire, they will have it inſcribed on their portraits, and engraved on their monuments, that they were appointed to ſave India from ruin, by the unanimous voice of the Commons of England. What has been the return to Mr. Fox for braving thoſe dangers and withſtanding theſe allurements? He has been diſgraced by his Prince, and abandoned for a time (for it cannot be a long one) by the people; by that Prince to whoſe juſt rights in India he attended, though he was obliged, from neceſſity, to ſuſpend them for a very few years, when other ſervants of the Crown had neglected them; and by that people, even to whoſe jealouſies, however unjuſt, he paid a compliment, when he took power from himſelf, and gave it thoſe who could not be ſuſpected of abuſing it. A terrible example to future Miniſters! to teach them to creep through their Adminiſtrations, unknown,

unheard of indeed, but not difgraced; to aim at little ends by little means; and to accommodate themfelves to the jealoufies, the animofities, and the caprices of thofe for whom they contrive laws, inftead of ftriking thofe bold and great ftrokes of ftate which are to fave Empires, in fpite of thofe who command, or who compofe them. It is very well known, that one of the boldeft Minifters England ever faw, Lord Chatham, owned to his familiar friends, that he retired from power at the approach of the peace, becaufe it was impoffible for any man to make one that would pleafe the people of England. But did Mr. Fox fhrink from the falvation of India, and confequently of England, whofe wealth and power cannot ftand, if India falls; becaufe it was impoffible for him, in doing fo, to pleafe the Crown, the India-Houfe, and the mob of England, all at one time? No! no!

Yet one circumftance is fortunate for Mr. Fox: The facts are fixed on which all who choofe to think for themfelves can form a

judgment

judgment upon the juſtice or injuſtice he has met with. The ſceptre of India was, by the confeſſion of every one, ready to drop from the hands of England. His Majeſty earneſtly preſſed Parliament twice, during the late Adminiſtration, to make proviſions to prevent it. Mr. Pitt and his friends warned Adminiſtration not to do things by halves, but to preſent to Parliament a ſyſtem of regulations worthy of their object. Mr. Fox framed that ſyſtem. It was approved by a majority of above 150 votes of the Houſe of Commons. No county, and only one borough in the kingdom, petitioned againſt it. The Lords, as individuals, ſhowed no repugnance to it; and the public believed that a few days would have ſent it through their Houſe. But a private Nobleman is ſaid to have whiſpered the King's wiſhes againſt the bill, to thoſe whom he calls the King's friends in the Houſe of Lords. The bill was inſtantly ſtopped in that Houſe; and ſoon after, Mr. Fox and his friends were diſmiſſed from Adminiſtration, and a new

Parliament

Parliament called to ſupport a new one. Mr. Fox, in conducting his bills, declared in Parliament, that he ſtaked his credit with the preſent age, and his reputation with the future, upon their merit. His enemies have avowed to the nation, that he was removed from the ſervice of his King and country on account of their demerit. Iſſue is, therefore, joined between his friends and his foes. Whether his regulations for India were wiſe or unwiſe, could have compaſſed or defeated their own ends, would have rendered him the ſaviour or the curſe of thirty millions of people, and of his country, is the queſtion. If he was guilty, let him fall. If he was not guilty, let the mob of England (by which I mean the high as well as the low mob, when the high forget themſelves,) reflect on what they have done.

It is become the more neceſſary to give an account of the ſyſtem of policy and juſtice contained in Mr. Fox's two bills, which I deem to have been the completion

of human wiſdom ; becauſe, from ſome inquiries made at public offices, which cannot be miſtaken, I have reaſon to believe, that not two hundred of thoſe bills ever went into the country at all. So that 99 out of an hundred, or rather 999 out of 1000 of thoſe who addreſſed againſt them, were as ignorant of their contents as if they had never been framed.

Mr. Fox's bills had five objects: The rights of the Crown, the government of the Company at home, the government abroad, the ſervants of the Company abroad, and the natives of the country.

THE RIGHTS OF THE CROWN.

IT is a maxim founded in common ſenſe, and admitted by all writers on public law and politics, That countries won by arms and treaty, by the ſubjects of any Prince, and ſtill more if the conqueſt was gained by the aſſiſtance of his arms, fall under his dominion; that is to ſay, their ſpare revenues become his, and the patronage of offices, civil and military, fall to his diſpoſal. When Mr. Townſhend was making his £. 400,000 parliamentary bargain with the Eaſt-India Company, he was reminded of this, and of the abſurdity in politics, that the King of England ſhould be the only perſon in his kingdom, who had no intereſt in the increaſe or decreaſe of the wealth of immenſe dominions belonging to himſelf. Mr. Townſhend's anſwer was, that he knew all theſe things very well; but that, circumſtanced as he was with the India-Houſe and the Houſe of Commons, he

was obliged to make the beſt bad bargain that he could, to keep meaſures with the India Company, who would not part with the patronage, and with the Country Gentlemen, who inſiſted for the money to the public, to keep their own eſtates free of taxes. When Lord North framed his bill for India, in the year 1773, he paid greater reſpect to the intereſts of his Royal Maſter. But he had one formidable oppoſition, headed by the Duke of Richmond, to contend with in the India-houſe; and another in the Houſe of Commons, watching all his motions, and turning them againſt him: A great war raged in America: Other wars threatened from other quarters: Circumſtances which cauſe every Miniſter to pauſe at every move that he makes, and even the boldeſt of them to ſtart at the very ſound of innovation. Beſides theſe diſadvantages, he had not that acceſs to the papers of the India-houſe which has ſince been obtained, to let him ſee all the extent of the diſorders of the Company, and conſequently all the neceſſity of applying ſtronger and better

hands

hands than theirs, to ſet their affairs to rights again. But what he could do, he did. A bill was paſſed, by which it was intended to diffuſe, over a vaſt kingdom, the bleſſings of law, of which the ſervants of the Eaſt India Company had robbed it; and the patronage of that law, ſo important in its operations and effects, was ſecured to the Crown. A great Council of State was ſent out, to control the diſorders of the Company's ſervants in matters of government, as effectually as the great Court of Juſtice was intended to control them in matters of juſtice; and in the choice of the members recommended to Parliament to compoſe that Council, the moſt delicate attentions were ſhown to the private inclinations of Majeſty. Powers were beſtowed on that great Court of Juſtice, and on that great Council of State, worthy of the Sovereign, whoſe perſon was repreſented by the one, and whoſe wiſhes and inclinations had been gratified in the other. Even the government of the empire was in a manner put into the hands of the King, be-

caufe there lay an appeal to him againft the ordinances of that great Council. But Lord North could go no further; the ftate of the Company's funds left not a penny to be given to the King from his own eftate rendered bankrupt by others.

The bill of Mr. Dundas, who is now under fuch dire alarms for the interefts of prerogative, took no more notice of the rights of the King, than if he had been a clerk in an office. It took the Crown of the Eaft fairly from the head of the King of England, and clapped it on that of the Governor-general of Bengal, named by the Company.

Mr. Pitt's bill of laft Spring, indeed, replaced it where it ought to be; though, as he complained at one time of Mr. Fox for giving the Crown too much, and at another time for giving it too little, and concluded by giving it more in his bill than Mr. Fox had done in his; for, without any neceffity, he gave to the Crown inftantly what Mr. Fox, from neceffity, had put off

for

for four years; it may be doubted whether his alterations upon Mr. Dundas's bill arose from views of party in Parliament, of flattery to his Prince, or of virtue in himself. Perhaps it may also be doubted, if that alteration by Mr. Pitt on Mr. Dundas's bill could arise from any motive at all, in a a person whose arguments were continually varying with the turn of the day to be served, and who, in the hurry of a new and giddy situation, could hardly find time for one serious reflection, or one settled opinion.

But Mr. Fox's two bills proceeded upon system, in a man, the very mode of whose public speaking shews that he thinks with system, because there is a beginning, a middle, and an end, in all that he says. They were accommodated to the actual state of different great bodies as they stood, not to idle theories about prerogative. And they were not confined to the interests of one object alone. Not influenced by the reserves of Mr. Townshend;—not hampered

pered as Lord North hath been, ſince the India Houſe was now divided, the Houſe of Commons now united, the nation now at peace, and the ſtatutes paſſed in Lord North's adminiſtration, added to the diviſions of the India-Houſe, now gave acceſs to papers and information from the India-Houſe which Lord North never had;—not neglecting the honour and the intereſt of his preſent Majeſty, his Son, and his Son's Son, for ever, as the Dundas's bill had done;—not throwing all India into the hands of the Crown *now* to loſe it *for ever after*, as Mr. Pitt's bill did; he reſolved, in a promiſing hour, to aſſert his Royal Maſter's rights, and yet to expoſe them to no danger when he did ſo. The Parliamentary Reports upon Indian affairs, which it is now the mean and ungenerous faſhion to depreciate, though they are monuments of the induſtry, patience, accuracy, and vaſt extent of views of thoſe who compoſed them, opened a ſcene of iniquity, diſorder, and folly, of great public rapacity and little private knavery, of varying and unbounded project,

project, accompanied with mean and confused capacity to execute it, that is unparelleled in the records of mankind. In this situation, Mr Fox saw with the eye of an eagle, that these disorders could not be radically cured, that India could not be saved, if he pursued only one object, the rights of the Crown, which he meant to assert, and lost sight of all others. It occurred, that the gift of countries so disordered, so tottering to their fall, would have been unworthy the acceptance of the Royal hand, to whom it was offered; that, though it was possible to keep them, when once settled, in the common routine of ministerial business and office, it was impossible to recover them in a routine which, in its own nature, is continually subject to change and dependence; and that, therefore, it was necessary, for a few years, to make a permanent establishment, subject to no change, and no dependence, for the management of India; that, for these few years, dictatorial powers should be conferred upon it, and, among others, the power of placing and displacing

servants,

ſervants, that is, of putting men into ſcenes of active duty, who could and would perform it, and removing thoſe who could not or would not; and that the choice of the perſons to compoſe the eſtabliſhment ſhould be left to the wiſdom of the great Council of the nation, that is, the King, Lords, and Commons. By a happy ray of genius, he imagined the idea of ſuſpending the exertion of the right of the Crown for four years, (a ſuſpenſion of which the Crown had not complained for ten years preceding), in order that it might be reſtored to his Majeſty in repair, in order, in ſtrength, and with ſafety, at the end of thoſe years, and ſecured to his family for ever after. By theſe means Mr. Fox united the moſt delicate attention in the duty which he owed to the great perſonage in whoſe ſervice he was, with the duty which he owed to his country.

There are not wanting perſons who think that he did too much for the Crown; for as, by his bills, the Crown had the nomination

nation of the Commiſſioners upon vacancies, it was probable, from the deaths, the ſickneſs, the preferments, the diſguſt at fatigue of the firſt Commiſſioners, and other circumſtances, that, in two or three years, one half of the Commiſſion would have been filled up by his preſent Majeſty.

It is even believed that it was in contemplation by the late Miniſters to follow Mr. Fox's two bills with a third, to give the Crown a ſhare in the produce of the territorial revenues of India, dependent upon the eventual increaſe of them, and to inſure, upon the faith of Parliament, ſuch a dividend to the Company, as would have raiſed the value of every ſtock-holder's property to what it ought to be; and that the only reaſon for not opening thoſe intentions, was the indelicacy to the King and to the Company, of doing ſo while the two firſt bills were in dependence. But the officiouſneſs, imprudence, and raſhneſs of one private Nobleman, barred all future explanations, and would even have given the appearance of meanneſs to explanation.

It was the ſaying of Catharine of Medicis, that a well timed lie might ſave a kingdom. But it is much more true that an ill timed lie may ruin one. When it was lately believed that the prerogative of his Majeſty was invaded, and invaded by his own Miniſters, and one of whom was under great perſonal obligations to him, the Peers were miſtaken, the people were miſled, and the King was miſinformed. The deception being now known and paſt, it would be happy for all parties, if, in the words of the Comedy, called " All in the Wrong," they ſhould ſhake hands again, confeſs that they had been all in the wrong, and be good friends for the future.

II.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE COMPANY AT HOME.

BY theſe bills reſponſibility was, for the firſt time, introduced into the government of the India-Houſe. At preſent, each individual Director can ſhelter himſelf from the blame of a wrong meaſure, under the name of the Direction; becauſe it does not appear, upon record, who adviſed or voted for it. To make concealment more concealed, the Directors often vote by ballot. Laſtly, they are not removeable, even upon an addreſs of either Houſe of Parliament. But, by Mr. Fox's bills, each Commiſſioner, upon a difference of opinion, was obliged to put his opinion, with his reaſons for or againſt the motion, into writing; the ballot was aboliſhed; and the Commiſſioners were removeable, upon an addreſs of either Houſe of Parliament. The attack upon a Miniſter

is often made through the delinquency of public offices filled with his friends; and for that reaſon, they are generally protected by him from inquiry. But, by theſe parts of the bills, the late Adminiſtration ſeemed to have courted, inſtead of dreaded, inquiſition for thoſe who were ſaid to have been their friends.

2. Whilſt they expoſed thoſe friends to fear, to keep them true to the public, they took from them hopes which might make them falſe to the public. It is not uncommon for the Directors to be engaged in the ſhipping, trade, and ſtores of the Company; that is, they firſt make up their own accompts as they pleaſe, and then controul them as they pleaſe. But Mr. Fox's bills, by prohibiting the new Commiſſioners or their aſſiſtants to deal in the ſhipping, trade, or ſtores of the Company, by diſabling them to hold other offices in England during pleaſure, or in India at all, and by making the poſſeſſion of their offices certain for four years, made them equally

equally independent of the India-Houſe, the Miniſters, the Crown, and the Mob, and dependent only on their own conſciences and public fame.

3. The bankruptcies of the richeſt Company that ever was on earth, were, like the exploſions of Mount Ætna, not ſuſpected until they were felt. The actual ſtate of their money-matters was concealed within the walls of one India-Houſe, and known no where elſe; it was often concealed within the walls of one room; for, as the Direction was divided into different committees, one committee often did not know what another was doing, or what another knew. But the ſame deſire of removing concealment, which made the late Adminiſtration introduce reſponſibility into the Direction, made them provide, that, every year, the Commiſſioners ſhould lay before the Company a ſtate of their trade, ſhipping, and debt, and before Parliament the ſame ſtate, with an additional one of the revenue, and expences civil, military, and naval.

One of the beſt financiers in Europe, Monſ. Neckar, was the firſt who ſtruck out this luminous idea, and threw it into the French Eaſt-India Company. Almoſt in an inſtant that Company, from the moſt univerſal diſcredit, regained the confidence of the public, and the ſupport of the King of France.

4. The chief diſorders of the Company's affairs have ariſen from the junction of the incompatible characters of Sovereign and Merchant in the ſame perſons, which led them into a ridiculous mixture of the great and the little in the conduct of their buſineſs. For example, the great views of the Sovereign made it neceſſary for them to have an army in the Carnatic; but the little views of Merchants, to ſave expence, tempted them to employ it only in collecting the revenues and taxes. Until General Stewart arrived at Madras, the army was, for the purpoſes of collection, cantoned all over the dominion, in threes or fours in a place, like ſo many Exciſe-officers, inſtead

of

of being kept together in a body, and to do duty as ſoldiers. To put an end to this incompatible junction, the bill ſeparated the two departments of government and trade. With one ſet of men, whoſe birth, fortunes, education, and habits of political buſineſs gave them political knowledge, was lodged the care of government and revenue, under the name of Commiſſioners. To another ſet, the ſons of induſtry, who, by their habits of life, had been accuſtomed to induſtry, œconomy, accuracy, ſagacity, and invention in private buſineſs, and who had, through their own merits, raiſed themſelves in the world, was intruſted the care of the trade, under the name of Aſſiſtant Directors. The nomination, upon vacancies of the former, was placed (as it ought to be) in the King; and of the latter (as it ought to be) in the Company: But, to preſerve ſubordination and the obſervance of duty, the Aſſiſtant Directors were, for malverſation or neglect, removeable by the Commiſſioners.

To

To this arrangement it has been objected, that the conduct of the trade ſhould have been left to the Company, who have moſt intereſt in it: But the whole wit of man could not have contrived a ſurer ſource of contention, confuſion, and ruin to the Company and the public. In the year 1766, the Company acquired a dominion in Bengal, which produced them a land revenue, free of all expences, of £. 1,600,000. To the aſtoniſhment of mankind, in ſeven years this vaſt revenue could not anſwer the debts of the Company. But the mode of ſtating the accompts, when produced, removed the wonder. The dividend of the Company was the reſult of a mixed accompt, in which the produce of the land-rents and of the taxes was combined with the profits of the trade and the extent of the Company's debts; a mode of accompting, which the Company's ſervants might always turn to the diſadvantage of the revenues, even though the land-rents and taxes were in ever ſo flouriſhing a ſtate; becauſe, by means of it, they could always lay their miſmanagement

in

in trade, or in contracting debt, upon the revenues. The very ſame thing would happen if the revenues were in the hands of Parliamentary Commiſſioners, and the trade in thoſe of the Company's Directors; for if, in paſt times, theſe laſt could exhauſt £. 16,000,000 a year of clear revenue, with how much greater eaſe, in future times, could they exhauſt the preſent revenue in its embarraſſed ſtate!

5. Men ſometimes got into the Direction, merely to protect themſelves from complaints which they dreaded, thereby becoming both the parties accuſed and the judges of the accuſation. To prevent this it was provided, that no perſon ſhould be a Commiſſioner or Aſſiſtant Director, againſt whom a charge of corruption, peculation, or oppreſſion, had been made for two years before his nomination, and who had not been acquitted of the charge; nor could any ſervant of the Company act in either of theſe capacities till two years after his return from India.

6. The power of a General Court to reverse the orders of the Directors, threw confusion into the business, and added faction to confusion. Mr. Hastings, notwithstanding the splendour of abilities and of character, received a present of £. 200,000 from an Indian Prince, after an act of Parliament and the voice of all England had warned him, that to accept such present was a crime in all; but in a man of his high station, joined dishonour to criminality. Upon this account the House of Commons and the Board of Directors joined in recalling him; but the Court of Proprietors continued him in his place. The Princes of India, to whom such contrary orders were notified, asked with astonishment, if England was a country governed by a government at all?—The bills took this power virtually away.

III.

GOVERNMENT ABROAD.

Mr. Hastings and Mr. Rumbold the Governors of Bengal and Madras, as appears by the Parliamentary Reports, had aſſumed to themſelves the moſt unprecedented powers: Thoſe of making war and peace, of hiring out the Company's troops as mercenaries to Princes of the country, of giving away the dominions of England to other European ſtates, of acquiring new ones from native Princes, of delegating their own and their Councils powers to others, of carrying on ſecret correſpondences unknown to their own Councils; nay, and of limiting all the regulations of the ſtatute of the year 1773, intended for a great empire, to certain forts and factories in it. All theſe extravagancies were brought back in the bills to the rules of common ſenſe.

 2. Diſputes

2. Diſputes, and very dangerous ones too, had ariſen in India concerning the ſubordination of the inferior Councils to that of Bengal, on political queſtions of war and peace. Theſe were guarded againſt for the future, by the bills, as far as human foreſight could go.

3. India, from the year 1766, until the year 1783, had exhibited a repetition of continual criminality in the ſervants of the Company, and of continual impunity. Both aroſe either from the colluſion of the Directors with delinquents; or from their procraſtination, or deſire to conceal delinquencies, even when there was no colluſion. But, to prevent any of theſe cauſes from operating for the future, it was provided in the bills, that, upon a charge againſt any of the Company's ſervants in India, the Commiſſioners ſhould examine the charge within twenty days of its being made; and all the care that the nature of the caſe could admit, was taken, for obliging the Commiſſioners to give

give ſpeedy juſtice to native Princes injured by the ſervants of the Company.

4. The ſame ſpirit of procraſtination had often led the Directors to give no anſwer at all to references from the Councils in India for their opinion; and to take no notice of diſputes, even the moſt important in their nature and effects, either appearing on record, or relative to which directions had been aſked from the Directors by the Councils abroad. To prevent ſuch ſtagnations in the very action of government, it was provided, that the Commiſſioners ſhould, in all time coming, give immediate anſwers to the one, and directions for the other.

5. Inſtances had occurred in which perſons charged with crimes in India, or even diſmiſſed the ſervice on that account, had come to England, and without the charges againſt them having been examined, had returned in great ſtations to India, ſo as to enable them to conceal their crimes, to

take

take revenge on their accuſers, and to terrify all others from complaints. It was, therefore, provided in the bills, that no perſon ſo charged ſhould return in ſtation to India, until he was acquitted of the charge.

IV.

SERVANTS OF THE COMPANY IN INDIA.

The injuries of the ſervants of the Company to the natives, were enormous. The ſtatute of the year 1773, had prohibited them to take preſents, and made the preſent a forfeiture to the Company. This condition defeated its own end; for the native was equally plundered, whether the benefit of what was forced from him went to the robber or to the Company: The bills, therefore, made the preſent return to its owner; or, if he did not claim, to any who ſhould; and they ſuperadded penalties upon the acceptance of preſents. In the government of Mr. Haſtings, a ſcene had been exhibited which the Sun never ſaw; for the whole proprietors of land, of a kingdom larger and richer than France, were diſpoſſeſſed of their property in one day, and their eſtates ſet up to auction for rack rents. The Company's ſervants rented

many

many of them in their own perſons, and more of them (which was worſe) by their Banyans, that is, perſons in their ſervice, who could do what their employers durſt not. Monopolies were eſtabliſhed; thoſe ſure deſtroyers of trade and manufacture. The ſervants advanced, at extravagant rates, money on materials to be purchaſed, on goods to be made, on crops to be raiſed by the natives; and, under this cover, were guilty of uſury and extortion with impunity. They trafficked in the collection and farming of the revenues, whereby they came to have an intereſt oppoſite to that of their maſters. Some of the military ſervants, and even civil ones, made war and invaſions without any authority but their own. The higher ſervants poſſeſſing great power by their ſtations, lent, or pretended to lend, great ſums to native Princes under the protection of Britiſh Government, farmed their revenues, made or pretended to make great furniſhings to them in the way of commerce, and then made up their accounts as they pleaſed, with debtors who trembled at their

frown:

frown. All these abuses which are proved in the reports of the East-India Committees, were provided against in the bills.

2. Peculators in India got seats in the British House of Commons, with a view to be judges of complaints against themselves. By the bills, the Company's servants were precluded from seats in Parliament, for a certain time after their return from India.

3. Princes in India had their agents members in the English House of Commons; that is, foreign Princes had their Ambassadors and spies in a British Senate, to be judges in questions there, relating to the interest of their master; an extravagance and impudence of corruption which even the most corrupt times of Rome never knew. It was proved in the Parliamentary reports, that one of them had offered a bribe to the Duke of Grafton, when Prime Minister of Britain, and to his Secretary: But, when these Ambassadors soared so high, it may well be suspected, that they

would not be leſs ſcrupulous in their addreſſes to private Members of Parliament; or that theſe would not always receive the offer with the ſame contempt which a deſcendent of the blood royal of England did. This dangerous innovation was barred by the bills.

V. NATIVES.

V.

NATIVES.

THE natives were bound to obey regulations with which they were not made acquainted; for the ſtatute of the year 1773, gave power to the great council, with conſent of the great court of juſtice, to make what ordinances they found needful; but theſe ordinances were not publiſhed. The bills removed this abſurdity, and ordered them to be publiſhed in the language of the natives.

2. When theſe generous bills reſtored to the proprietors of lands, thoſe eſtates of which the auctions of Mr. Haſtings had deprived them, they fixed their rents to be the ſame which had been paid in former times, and declared, that, for the future, they ſhould not be augmented.

3. The bills fecured fuch of the native Princes as were under the protection of England, in the moft unbounded enjoyment of all their rights, and provided reparations for the oppreffions they had fuffered, or fhould fuffer, againft their Englifh oppreffors. In pity to human kind, they extended protection even to thofe who were dependent on fuch Princes, and directed that no additional burthens fhould be laid upon them, and that the rents of the landholders fhould not, in future times, be augmented. By this complication of humanity, applied to fo many different objects, the framers of thofe bills did all that men could do, to attach the immenfe body of the natives of all dominions connected with ours, to that government on which the fecurity of their own tenure was thus made to depend. The bills alfo laid down a variety of regulations to extricate the unfortunate Sovereigns of Tanjour and Arcott, from the misfortunes in which their fatal confidence in the friendfhip of the Eaft-India Company had involved them.

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The laſt regulation I ſhall take notice of was, that all offences againſt the bills might be tried in the King's Bench; that is, by the faireſt court on the face of the earth.

Theſe are ſeveral of the regulations of Mr. Fox's bills (for I have not done juſtice to all of them). He might well ſay, with the ſhade of Hector to Æneas,

————— Si Pergama dextra
Defendi poſſent, etiam hac defenſa fuiſſent.

Theſe regulations have been complained of for violating the charters of the Eaſt-India Company. The ſtatute of the year 1763, for regulating the dividends of the Company, infringed their charters in three, and the ſtatute of 1773 in twenty-five reſpects; if ſaving the Company from loſs of dominions, bankruptcy, and knavery, can be called infringing their rights. The ſtatute of 1779 continued all theſe imaginary violations, and added four more. The ſtatute of 1780 did the ſame. Mr. Dundas's long bill of fifty-eight pages, contained almoſt

almoſt as many alterations of the charter as it did pages. Mr. Pitt's bill of laſt Spring, contained as many as a ſhorter bill could hold. Yet a popular cry was raiſed againſt the Duke of Portland and his friends, for doing the very ſame thing, and it ſucceeded. This might appear odd, were it not certain, from hiſtory, that nations have their fits of phrenzy, like private perſons; but, like them too, they have their recoveries; of which the preſent returning current of juſtice to the characters of Mr. Fox and his friends, and to common ſenſe, afford an example.

I have ſaid, in the beginning of this paper, that new circumſtances and ſituations always produce new effects. If, then, it be true that the Commons can no longer make uſe of that great controul on the power of the Crown, the command of the purſe; that the Houſe of Lords was laſt Winter miſled, even by the report of a name, no matter whether with or without its authority; that the exertions of a late ſpirited

ſpirited Houſe of Commons were rendered uſeleſs by deſertion; that the people are loſt to a ſenſe of their own ſafety; that diſſolutions of Parliament, lately revived, may be uſed as engines to overawe the Houſe of Commons; that men of open generous, ardent, and able minds, lovers of grandeur and glory in the conduct of affairs, are kept under, juſt in proportion as they ought to be lifted aloft; and that a ſublime ſyſtem of policy and juſtice, for the recovery of the Eaſtern empire, after the ſad blow which England had ſo recently received in the loſs of the Weſtern one, has been loſt, for the ſake of a paltry Court intrigue; I ſay, if theſe things be true (for I hope they are not all ſo) what do they portend!

They portend the loſs of Ireland and India, not far diſtant, and conſequently of the funds and public credit of England, as ſurely as we have loſt America; though the laſt event was as little thought of a few years ago, as the others are now.

They portend, at home, loſs either to the throne or to the people, nobody can foreſee which. If it falls firſt on the Crown, (which may very well happen when the Crown is placed on the bladder of party), it will be fatal in the end to the people; becauſe the key-ſtone of the Conſtitution cannot be ſhaken without the arch being rent. If the loſs falls firſt on the people, it will be fatal in the end to the Crown; becauſe a King of England is great, and even ſafe, only in proportion as his people are free, and their minds generous and high. In this view, the hidden ſap of influence, the open ſtorm of diſſolution, the one to ſoothe, the other to over-awe the minds of Parliament-men, will be equally fatal to the Crown and to its ſubjects; for the conſequences of them will be, that no more than the forms of a conſtitution, which once made both King and people envied and happy, will be preſerved, when the reality of it is gone.

When

When that happens, and, from ſuch principles of Adminiſtration, if not altered, it too probably will happen, the only difference between England and France will be, that the French government will be conducted by violence, the Engliſh by influence and awe; the one by an army, the other by a Parliament. The engine of government in the two nations will indeed be different, but the effect the ſame. In both caſes, men will be ruled by the will of others, and not by their own: But the lot of France will be the luckieſt; for, in England, Engliſhmen will feel the loſs of independence more ſenſibly, by having the forms of it placed continually before their eyes.

Of all human conſtitutions the worſt is a Monarchy conducting its operations by dependent and timid Senates, both to the ſubject and to the Prince; *to the ſubject*, for Tiberius did by his Senates what he dared not to have done by his Pretorian guards. *To the Prince*; a free Parliament will, from

principle, ſupport a good Prince: An army, from gallantry of ſentiment, may ſupport even a bad one. But all hiſtory proves, and all hiſtory will prove, that dependent timid Senates flatter their Sovereign in the hour of proſperity, to his ruin, abandon him in difficulty, and cruelly inſult and mock his adverſity.

The miſchiefs do not ſtop at the firſt ſufferers, they deſcend to the lateſt poſterity of the people, and to the family of the Prince. The grandeur and wealth of Britain ariſes, not, as is often ſuperficially thought, from her religion, or her commercial advantages, whether natural or artificial, her wool, her iron, her harbours, her ſhips, her fiſheries; in all of which, men miſtake the effects for the cauſe; but it ariſes from that activity of mind and body, that conſtant exertion of induſtry and ambition which the conſciouſneſs of independence, and, conſequently of ſecurity, inſpires. Remove that conſciouſneſs, and the mind will ſhrink up, like a ſnail into its

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ſhell. Should that happen ſoon, (which God forbid,) the preſent reign would be diſtinguiſhed by the fall of commerce at home, and by the loſs of all the Engliſh ſettlements abroad; as that of Henry VI. was by the loſs of France, and as that of Charles I. would have been by the loſs of Scotland, Ireland, and the middle provinces of America, if England had not rouſed herſelf, indignant to ſee, amid paltry ſquabbles about prerogative, the dominions of Britain diſſevered for ever.

It has been often the fate of England to ſtand upon the brink of perilous precipices; and yet ſhe has recovered the falſe ſteps which brought her there: For Providence, ever ſince the world began, has always held ſome nation on high, to ſhew other nations the ſublime heights to which their own ſpirits may carry them. In the twelve years before the laſt Parliament of Charles I. England ſeemed to have loſt her liberties for ever; yet the ſpirit of that ſingle Parliament recovered them. Before the year 1672, the

independence of England, of Holland, and of Europe, and the Proteſtant religion, ſeemed to be verging to one common grave; yet the Parliament of that year breathed life into all of them anew. In the three laſt years of Charles II. and the firſt of James II. the people ſeemed to have loſt all ſenſe of their own ſafety; they abandoned their real friends, exalted the pretended friends of the Crown; and, like the ancient Cappadocians, or modern Danes, appeared unconſcious of their own importance as freemen. But a few votes of a ſingle ſeſſion of Parliament recovered them from their ſtupor, brought to their remembrance that they were Engliſhmen, and taught them ſoon to diſtinguiſh their true friends from their true foes.

Where, then, is the reſource of this our day to be found? I anſwer there, where, perhaps, it will not be expected I ſhould anſwer; in the preſent Parliament; and, by Parliament, I mean the Lords, the Commons, and the King. If it be true, that the Lords ſo far loſt the ſenſe of their honour as

to

to have been led by a whifper, when their anceftors could not be frightened by the Tower and the ax, they cannot, however, be blind to their intereft, and to the reflection, that, as they are the firft in dignity, they muft feel the lofs of it the moft. If an unufual number of new Members have got feats in the Houfe of Commons, by taking advantage of the mifapprehenfions of the people, they are not to blame in a country in which, becaufe it is a free one, ambition is a duty, and even a virtue. But will they, on that account, fubmit to lofe their own importance now, and betray that of their pofterity hereafter? The Sovereign, from principle, feels, and from ftudy knows, that the fame free conftitution which fecures his people, throws a fecurity around his throne and his family, which arms and power cannot enfure to other Princes. At this æra, too, fo cruel for his people, and for his own fenfibility, he cannot but reflect, that the greateft ignominy which could attend his memory, would be to have it recorded in hiftory, that, in his reign, the nobleft Conftitution

tion that God ever made, becauſe the moſt free, had ſuffered, after the greateſt Empire had been loſt that Prince ever poſſeſſed :---I ſay, the greateſt, for the ſucceſſors of Alexander and of the Cæſars loſt only empires of Slaves, not of Freemen.

God grant that reflection upon the above innovations in the preſent ſtate of things in Britain, and upon the conſequences which they portend, may make the ſame impreſſion upon the different conſtituent parts of that Parliament, which they have done upon the mind of him, who, in theſe ſheets, has pointed them out.

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